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ABSTRACT

One of the most important functions for metadiscourse (reading directives) is to serve as textual relevance cues. Readers must use metadiscourse to determine the specific task or communicative context for understanding the total meaning of a text. Some of the more common types of metadiscourse include (1) hedges--words used to convey a note of caution or confidence; (2) emphatics--words used to underscore what authors really believe or would have their readers think they believe; (3) sequencers--phrases or clauses that tell the reader the author's sequential plans and intentions for the text; and (4) topicalizers--phrases used to announce a shift in the topic. Metadiscourse can also be classified into three groups of adverbials: adjuncts (indicate the focus of what is being communicated), disjuncts (express an evaluation of what is being said), and conjuncts (indicate the connection between what is being said and what was said before). More attention must be given to teaching students metacognitive awareness of metadiscourse and strategies for its use so that they may understand what the author is saying; maintain schemata by connecting sentences; shift topics; recognize an introduction, a transition, and a conclusion; recognize the author's attitudes and whether the author is being subjective or objective, and recognize the relevance signals. In addition, readers need to be aware of the mood component. Both metadiscourse and mood should be taught as important factors in comprehension processing. (Appendixes include exercises for metadiscourse and mood.) (HOD)

The Metadiscourse Component:
Understanding Writing about Reading Directives

In Joe Williams' book Style (1980, p. 47), he points out that whenever an author writes more than a few words, he usually has to write on two levels. "He writes about the subject he is addressing, of course: foreign policy or the operation of a computer (the primary topic). But he also tells his audience directly or indirectly how they should take his subject." In these two sentences, for example, of course, but, and also function as directives to the reader--they serve more to direct than to inform him. And in the preceeding sentence for example told the reader how to connect that sentence to the previous two. Williams uses the term metadiscourse to distinguish this kind of writing about reading from writing about primary topics. Most texts contain some metadiscourse. Without it, an author couldn't announce that he is changing the subject or coming to a conclusion, that what he is asserting is more or less reliable, or that his ideas are important. Without metadiscourse, he couldn't define terms or acknowledge a difficult line of thought, or even the existence of a reader.

A good deal of metadiscourse is used in some kinds of writing: personal narrative, arguments, memoirs, or any discourse in which the author filters his ideas through a concern with how his readers will take them. Other kinds of writing such as operating instructions, laws, technical manuals, etc. may have no metadiscourse. Although some writers have not learned to control metadiscourse, thus burying their primary message,

generally it is very useful for readers. Successful discourse processing for comprehension requires that readers have under control conventional knowledge of metadiscourse (which is part of the language and communication system), in addition to operations for processing the primary topic discourse.

With metadiscourse awareness and strategies for using it, readers will better understand the authors' text plan. They will know whether they are reading the introduction, the body or conclusion of a text. And they'll know when the author has shifted to a different topic or defined a term. Readers will understand that an author believes what he is asserting is reliable, that he is conceding this point and pointing out this point or that he considers certain ideas more important than others.

One of the most important functions for metadiscourse is to serve as textual relevance cues (van Dyk, 1979). Van Dyk defines relevance as the result of an operation by which a reader assigns some degree of importance to some property of the discourse. Relevance is relative and varies according to the context: relevance for a certain author or reader, relevance with respect to a certain problem or task, etc. Relevance implies constrativeness: if some properties of a text are assigned relevance by authors or readers, other properties are not given relevance. According to van Dyk, relevance plays an important role in discourse comprehension. Types of relevance exist for various levels of analysis. Semantic relevance exists at the level of sentences, sequences, and discourse as a whole. Textual (structural) relevance should be distinguished from contextual relevance.

Textual relevance can be normal or differential. Normal textual relevance is defined in terms of information distribution concepts (topic/comment/focus) at the micro-structure level and by macro-structures at the level of global themes or topics. Differential textual relevance involves contrasting or foregrounding elements with respect to other elements at the same level (background). Metadiscourse helps put into readers' focal awareness what is important according to text structure.

Contextual relevance is defined in terms of cognitive set factors (knowledge, task, interest, and attitudes, etc.) by van Dyk. It is what the author intended to be important now or what the reader finds important now. Van Dyk's structual cognitive model tries to account for both textual and contextual relevance assignments. Normal relevance is determined by a standard text representation in episodic memory. Propositional information resulting from the cognitive set interacts with the structure by assigning extra structure and upgrading those elements considered important or relevant. This model accounts for processes of text learning, recall, and (re-) production of text on the basis of relevance assignments. Production contexts have their own relevance assignments according to the specific task or interests of the communicative context. Readers must use metadiscourse to determine the specific task or communicative context interest for understanding the total meaning of a text.

Van Dyk has ten types of relevance signals in discourse: graphical, phonetic/phonological, paratextual, syntactical, lexical, semantic, pragmatic, schematic/superstructural, stylistic, and rhetorical. Metadiscourse involves the lexical, and pragmatic types.

Lexical:

Direct relevance expressions: important, relevant, critical, etc.

Theme indicators: the subject/theme/ . . . is:

Summarizers: in brief/short, in other terms/words, etc.

Concluders: the conclusion, result, etc. is: we conclude . . .

Connectives: so, thus, hence

Superstructure signals: our premises are, the conclusion is, it all happened in, suddenly, the outcome was . . .

Pragmatic:

Global illocutionary force indicating devices: I (hereby) warn, ask, congratulate, you, particles.

Williams (1980) also discusses several of the more common types of metadiscourse.

Hedges

Hedges are words used by writers in all professions to convey a note of caution or confidence. Readers must understand how hedges work, how they show the author's attitude toward what he is saying. Hedges prevent what the author has to say about the primary topic from sounding too timid or arrogant. They give authors room for making exceptions. Some of the more common hedges: usually, often, sometimes, almost, virtually, possibly, perhaps, apparently, seemingly, in some ways, to a certain extent, sort of, for the most part, for all intents and purposes, in some respects, in my opinion at least, may, might, can, could, seem, tend, try, attempt, seek, hope. When hedges are used readers must realize they qualify the meaning of the rest of the proposition.

Emphatics

Emphatic metadiscourse underscores what authors really believe or would their readers to think they believe. Some of the more common emphatics: as everyone knows, it is generally agreed that, it's clear that, the fact is, as we can plainly see, literally, clearly, obviously, undoubtedly, certainly, of course, indeed, inevitably, very, invariably, always, key, central, crucial, basic, fundamental, major, cardinal, primary, principal, essential, integral. These words usually mean "Believe."

Sequencers

Sequencers are phrases or clauses that tell the reader the author's sequential plans and intentions for the text. E.g.:

> In this next section of the report, I will deal with the problem of noise pollution.
>
> or
>
> In this paper, I propose such criteria and apply them to a selection of well-known models; I then consider the status of my own deliberations in the same terms. (Beaugrande, 1980, p. 1).

Topicalizers

Phrases such as in regard to, where X is concerned, in the matter of, as for, speaking of, turning now to, there is/are, etc. announce a shift in the topic clearly for the reader.

> In regard to a vigorous style, the most important characteristic is a short, concrete subject followed by a forceful verb.
>
> or

Where the industrial development of China is concerned, it will be years before it becomes competitive with Japan's.

or

There are four ways to resolve this conflict.

Metadiscourse can be classified still another way. Linguists would call most metadiscourse adverbials (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1975). The three classes of adverbials are adjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts.

Adjuncts:

Adjuncts are integrated within the structure of the clause to at least some extent. E.g.:

I can now understand.

As far as mathematics is concerned, he was a complete failure.

Looked at politically, it was not an easy problem.

Focusing adjuncts indicate that what is being communicated is limited to a part that is focused (Limiter Adjuncts) or that a focused part is an addition (Additive Adjuncts).

Limiters:

Exclusives restrict what is said to the part focused, e.g.: alone, just, merely, only, purely, simply. Particularizers restrict what is said particularly or mainly to the part focused, e.g.: chiefly, especially, mainly, mostly, in particular.

Additives

Also, either, even, neither, nor, too, as well as, in addition. Viewpoint adjuncts indicate the point of view for the subject being discussed.

Disjuncts and conjuncts, on the other hand, are not integrated within the clause. Semantically, disjuncts express an evaluation of what is being said either with respect to the form of the communication or to its control. E.g.: Frankly, I am tired.

Fortunately, no one complained.

Most disjuncts are prepositional phrases or clauses. They can be divided into two main classes: Style disjuncts (a small class) and attitudinal disjuncts. Style disjuncts convey the speakers' comments in the form of what he is saying, defining in some way under what conditions he is speaking. Attitudinal disjuncts, on the other hand, comment on the content of the communication. Examples of the use of style disjuncts:

Seriously, do you intend to resign?

Strictly speaking, nobody is allowed in here.

Very frankly, I am tired.

Very frankly is equivalent to I tell you very frankly, an illocutionary speech act.

Common adverbs as style disjuncts include: bluntly, briefly, candidly, confidentially, frankly, generally, honestly, personally, seriously.

Examples of attitudinal disjuncts, adverbs that convey the speaker's comment on the content of what he is saying:

Obviously, nobody expected us to be here today.

Of course, nobody imagines that he will repay what he borrowed.

Even more important, he has control over the finances of the party.

To be sure, we have heard many such promises before.

He has probably left by now. (I consider it probable that . . . .:)

Attitudinal disjuncts can be put in semantic groups.

Group I: speaker's comment on the extent to which he believes that what he is saying is true.

(a) These express primarily a subjective view on the truth of what is said, usually the view of the speaker:

Certainly, they have no right to be there. ('I am certain that . . .')

Those expressing conviction: admittedly, certainly, definitely, indeed, surely, undeniably, undoubtedly, unquestionably.

Those expressing some degree of doubt: quite, likely, maybe, perhaps, possibly, presumably, reportedly, supposedly.

(b) These present degrees of conviction as open to objective evidence.

Obviously, they have no right to be here. ('It is obvious to me and to everybody else that . . .')

Those expressing conviction: clearly, evidently, plainly, incontestably.

Those expressing some degree of doubt: apparently.

(c) These refer to the reality or lack of reality in what is said: actually, really, ideally, officially, technically, theoretically.

Those expressing that what is being said is true in principle: basically, essentially, fundamentally.

Group II: comment other than on the truth-value of what is said.

(a) These convey the attitudes of the speaker without any necessary implication that the judgment applies to the subject of the sentence or indeed to the speaker.

Fortunately, John returned the book yesterday.

(b) These convey the speaker's attitude, with the implication that the judgment applies to the subject of the sentence.

Wisely, John returned the book yesterday.

While semantically the function of disjuncts is to express how the writer evaluates the form of the content or what is said in the content, conjuncts have a connective function. They indicate the connection between what is being said and what was said before. Most conjuncts are adverb phrases or prepositional phrases. E.g.:

We have complained several times about the noise, and yet he does nothing about it.

I have looked into his qualifications. He seems very intelligent, though.

If they open all the windows, then I'm leaving.

I'd like you to do two things for me. First, phone the office and tell them I'll be late. Secondly, order a taxi to be here in 30 minutes.

You can tell him I'll not put up with his complaints any longer. What's more, I'll tell him that myself tomorrow.

I see you've given him a good report. You're satisfied with his work, then, are you?

I took him to the zoo and then to the circus. All in all, he's had a good time today.

It was a difficult exam. Nevertheless, he passed it.

He doesn't need any money from us. On the contrary, we should be going to him for a loan.

If it rains, then we eat at home.

Although I studied for the exam, still, I failed it.

Granted he's qualified on paper, nonetheless, I don't believe he can handle the job.

Because the fire inspectors noticed violations, accordingly we'll correct them.

While Mary prepared soup, meanwhile we prepared a salad.

True, the school is prestigious; however, its fringe benefits are low.

These common conjuncts can be grouped according to their subclasses:

Enumerative: first, second, third . . .; first, secondly . . .; one, two, three; a, b, c; for one thing . . . (and) for another (thing); to begin with, to start with; in the first place, in the second place; next, then; finally, last, lastly; to conclude

Reinforcing: also, furthermore, moreover, then, in addition, above, all what is more

Equative: equally, likewise, similarly, in the same way

Transitional: by the way, incidentally

Summative: then, all in all, in conclusion, to sum up

Apposition: namely, (viz); in other words, for example, (e.g.), for instance, that is (i.e.); that is to say

Result: consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus, as a result, somehow

Inferential: else, otherwise, then, in other words, in that case

Reformulatory: better, rather, in other words

Replacive: alternatively, rather, on the other hand

Antithetic: instead, then, on the contrary, in contrast, by comparison, on the other hand

Although I studied for the exam, still, I failed it.

Granted he's qualified on paper, nonetheless, I don't believe he can handle the job.

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Reformulatory: better, rather, in other words

Replacive: alternatively, rather, on the other hand

Antithetit: instead, then, on the contrary, in contrast, by comparison, on the other hand

Concessive: anyhow, anyway, besides, else, however, nevertheless, still, though, yet, in any case, at any rate, in spite of that, after all, on the other hand, all the same

Temporal Transition: meantime, meanwhile, in the meantime.

Sometimes the logical relationship between a subordinate clause and the superordinate clause that follows is emphasized by adding a conjunct to the latter. And sometimes attitudinal disjuncts with a concessive force may correlate with a concessive conjunct:

condition: if . . . then

concession: although/even though while/granted, even if . . . however, anyway nevertheless, nonetheless, anyhow

cause: because/seeing that . . . therefore/hence/accordingly/consequently

time: while . . . meanwhile/meantime

true/clearly/certainly . . . still/yet/however

A clause containing a conjunct may be linked to a preceding clause by one of the coordinators (and, but, or). E.g.:

and so or + else/again (replacive)

but + however/then (antithetic)/though

and/but + besides/still/yet/nevertheless

Because some readers begin reading appropriately but somewhere along the way forget what they are reading about, they have the problem of schema maintenance (Pearson & Spiro, 1980). Processing metadiscourse is as important as processing the primary topic discourse. Learning to process and understand metadiscourse is like learning to process and understand

directions. And just as many readers find reading and following directions a problem, so also many readers find the same problem with metadiscourse. More attention must be given to giving students metacognitive awareness of metadiscourse and strategies for its use so that they may understand how to take the author, maintain schemas by connecting sentences, shift topics, recognize an introduction, transition, and a conclusion, recognize the author's attitudes and whether he is being subjective or objective, and recognize the relevance signals.

The following suggestions should help students gain better awareness and mastery of metadiscourse:

1. Survey texts used by students in their classes for examples of metadiscourse and then use those passages in class, discussing the meanings and functions of the metadiscourse.
2. Give students the opportunity to give synonyms for the types of metadiscourse and generate sentences using them.
3. Give students sentences with the metadiscourse directives deleted and have them supply the directives.
4. Give them sentences with the metadiscourse directives deleted from various positions--initial, medial, and final position (a modified cloze test) and have them supply them for metadiscourse position awareness.
5. Give students whole essays, chapters or stories with metadiscourse deleted and have them supply the directives, being sure to delete all types of metadiscourse: adjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts, and to use a variety of discourse types: argumentation, narrative, description, expository, letters, reports, advertisements, etc. This

would give students experience with metadiscourse on a local and global level and discourse type and context specific metadiscourse.

6. Give writing assignments that require different types of metadiscourse (the subclasses of adjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts). This means different types of prose assignments: fables, folk tales, short stories, argumentative essays, cause and effect, comparison, contrast, process, technical and literary descriptions, advertisements, etc. Require the metadiscourse to be shown on the outline or plan sheet in brackets.

7. Present passages with metadiscourse where students must choose between three different types or choices/then discuss the reasons for choosing or not choosing each metadiscourse directive.

8. Have students bring in their own samples of metadiscourse from their in-school or out-of-school reading. These could be shared with the class, discussed and made into a book of metadiscourse examples.

9. Give students lists of metadiscourse types and meanings/functions to match. Require using each in various types of sentences (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex and declarative, imperative, question) and also in larger units--paragraphs and passages. Have them use them in initial, medial, and final positions, discussing the effect on meaning, emphasis, and theme for each position.

10. Make students aware of the morphology of the metadiscourse, giving experiences with suffixes and compounds. Students could also work with the etymology, spelling, and punctuations of connectors.

11. Give students practice in using informal and formal metadiscourse appropriately. Students should have experience using metadiscourse in both oral and written situations and on a continuum from informal to formal to make them aware of the difference between registers, oral and written discourse, and the internal and external conjuncts discussed by Halliday and Hasan (1976).

12. Try to have the teacher and class work out rules for using metadiscourse as a writer and reader. Provide lists of these rules for students to use as a self-checking guide for metacognition when they are reading or writing.

13. Hold students accountable for metadiscourse knowledge and application in reading comprehension tests with passages and items, that address this issue and in writing assignments requiring appropriate amounts and use of metadiscourse of all types.

Examples of some of these exercises can be seen in Appendix A. Surely if teachers make an effort to teach students explicitly about metadiscourse and the need for mastery in order to process and produce discourse, their students will become more literate and better text processors.

IV. The Mood Component: Understanding Nonlinguistic Feeling in Texts

Not only is the metadiscourse component necessary in a more adequate process model of reading comprehension, but also a mood component. The mood component can be defined as that component having to do with the mood or atmosphere of the text and the author's attitude toward his audience, the subject matter, and the situation. Mood in written discourse is often explicit as in the case of viewpoint adjuncts or disjuncts, or (which is

more usually the case) is implicit, requiring the reader to pick up on the syntactic, semantic, and lexical cues provided by the author. In addition, processing mood requires knowledge of rhetorical and literary devices used by authors to convey the mood of the text. Processing mood then, because of its usual implicitness, subtle cues, and knowledge of language and knowledge of language use requirements is a complex task.

Reading educators, cognitive psychologists, and psycholinguists have yet to discover mood as a factor in comprehension. But what readers learn from texts is heavily influenced by mood, both in terms of evaluation of entry into the text (I am interested, put off, by the text?) and in terms of evaluation of the content presented (what does it mean?). Mood, like all matters of style, is generally squeezed out of the K-12 curriculum and left for "college" where it is also squeezed out or inadequately treated (Dillon, in press).

Models of reading used by reading researchers are based on the notion that comprehension is essentially the extraction of propositional content logical structure or truth conditions of the passage read. Comprehension can be measured therefore in terms of the numbers of propositions expressed (and entailed) that subjects can recall from a text they have read. However, the meaning of a proposition is qualified by the mood in the text. Just as the surface form and propositional content is qualified by the tone of a speaker in oral discourse, so too is the surface form and propositional content qualified by the tone or mood of a writer expressed explicitly or implicitly in a text. Complete processing and comprehension of a text requires a model of reading with components of the 'said' and

'unsaid,' metadiscourse and mood, the logical and analogical, the decompositional and wholistic, the denotative and connotative.

The view of reading as propositional content extraction is also reflected in the educational system. Schools produce students who can give at least a rough account of what is said but not how it is to be taken; students who cannot identify the attitudinal metadiscourse or isolate and describe the mood. This view is deeply entrenched in most of the aptitude and achievement tests which are commonly cited to demonstrate how well students read and how adequately the schools are doing their job (Dillon, in press). If students are to come away from a text with a total meaning, they need schema availability, schema maintenance, schema construction ability for content and text features and mood control. Teachers need to use direct instruction for this mood control. The following exercise might be useful for such direct instruction:

1. Give background information on metadiscourse, speech act theory, rhetoric, and mood and then exercises on each with 'said' and 'unsaid' the explicit and implicit, and the two levels of meaning as variables. Discuss the speaker/author using mood as a device for making clear what act it is that he is performing when he says something (Bartine, 1979).
2. Define mood; give examples of kinds of moods.
3. Elicit descriptions of ways to express moods.
4. Have students listen to conversation, informal and formal oral discourse on tape and identify the speakers tone and the effect on meaning of the propositions.

5. Pick one mood (one in a particular text) and elicit ways to communicate it.

6. Discuss peculiarities of written text: how communication is in some ways restricted but in other ways facilitated (e.g., authors can "paint" a visual scene to stand for a mood).

7. Have students search for mood in a text, having them look for whole scenes, focusing on the text (Mason, 1981).

8. Have students search for mood in a text, having them look for syntactic clues, lexical terms, sentence and paragraph rhythm. Focus on finding a few key terms that signal tone (Purves, 1980).

9. Give students simple children's stories with an easy-to-perceive mood like "Frederick the Mouse" to introduce them to mood in texts. Analyze the text on a global level and local level.

10. Have students use a journal review form to evaluate three articles, one of which is a lampoon and two which are foils to identify those students who can recognize the satiric tone (Baldwin & Readence, 1979). Then use the assignment as a basis for discussion, analyzing the article for cues and devices that indicate tone.

Some examples of mood exercises and passages are found in Appendix B.

Conclusion

As a reading teacher in the future, I would make instructional decisions regarding methods and materials based on an integrated model of reading processes with the additional components of metadiscourse and mood as constraints on reading comprehension. I would usually focus on "the whole" first, a top-down approach, but I would also focus on "the parts"

a bottom-up approach when the need was present. Function words, especially prepositions and conjunctions used in metadiscourse would be high priority items. Surface form, the style, of which metadiscourse and mood is a part would be emphasized since the choice of linguistic form proceeds from the attitude and feelings of the author to the reader, subject matter, or purpose of the text. This non-linguistic component is the gradient between stiff, formal, cold, impersonal on the one hand and relaxed, informal, warm, friendly on the other. It is also joyous, sad, threatening, or satiric mood of the text. Both metadiscourse and mood would be taught as important factors in comprehension processing.

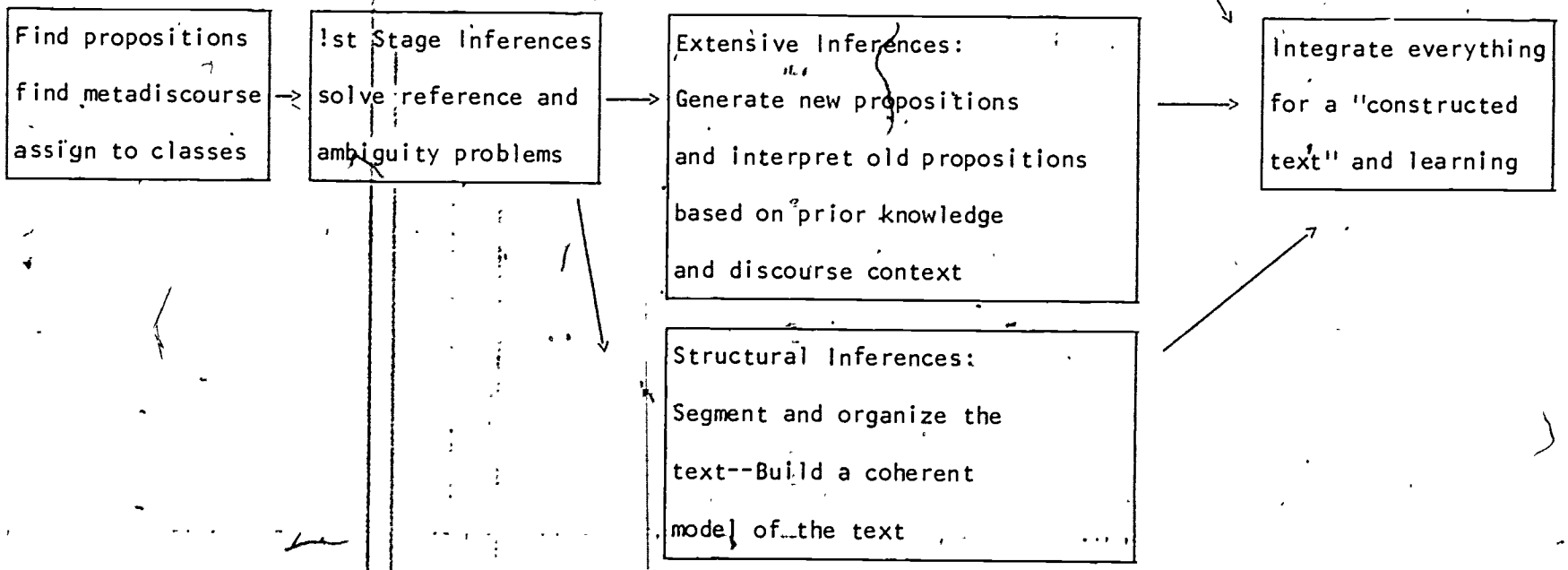

Figure 1: A partial process model for Text Comprehension

Appendix A

Metadiscourse Exercises

Exercise I

Use a suitable connecting word to join these two sentences into one compound sentence. The connecting should show how the ideas in each sentence are related.

1. The road between Pollock pines and Omo Ranch was quite rough. _____ we found it more comfortable to travel slower than usual.

2. The girl appeared to be at least three sizes too large for her bikini. _____ every eye was fixed upon her as the men waited for the fabric to fail.

3. The wreckers towed his car away, _____ he could no longer drive it.

4. Students are showing greater interest in baseball as a school sport. _____ students are showing a greater interest in dramatics.

5. She caused trouble wherever she went. _____ she was the kind of woman who could turn a peaceful exchange of views on the weather into a war of nerves.

6. Kent seldom bothers to attend class or read his assignments. _____ he has never even taken the first test.

7. San Francisco is visited by every foreign visitor who comes to the West. _____ its charms are known the world over.

8. The dog and the cat always fight, _____ it is obvious they hate each other.

9. Far too much emphasis has been placed on psychology and too little on personal responsibility. _____ a knowledge of psychology can be very valuable.

10. The next morning she was glad that she had not yielded to a scare, _____ he was most strangely and obviously better.

11. Recently Ralph Nader has criticized the auto industry for producing unsafe automobiles. _____ he condemned the Volkswagon as being the most dangerous car on the road.

12. All the figures were correct and had been checked, _____ the total came out wrong.

(from Writer's Workshop, Frew, Guches, Mehoffy, 1976).

Exercise II

Circle the letter of the connecting word that would be suitable for the blank at the beginning of the sentence.

Thank you very much for lending me this book. I'm afraid. I didn't understand much of it. 1 _____, I read less than half of it! 2 _____, it's a subject that interests me. 3 _____, it's the first one that I need to know more about for my work. This isn't the first time that I've tried to find out something about it, as you may remember. You can see I'm not giving up! I haven't got a lot of time to spend on it. 4 _____ perhaps you'd be good enough to send me that simple book you mentioned.

(from A Practical Guide to the Teaching of English; Riversand Temperley, 1978)

Exercise III

Decide whether each sentence is one that introduced a speech, concludes it, acts as a transitional connector, or does none of these. Circle your answer.

1. It is indeed a pleasure to address you on this occasion.
   A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

2. And, thus, for people in Europe as well as in America, this move seems to indicate better future relationships.
   A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

3. There are four countries whose actions should be discussed at some length.
   A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

4. In the same way, the forests of the Far West are being protected.
   A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

5. Because of these disastrous failures, it seems time that schools change their programs.
   A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

6. Today the lecture will be on Building a Vocabulary.
   A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

7. For the facts in the case, let us examine these files.
A. Introductory B. Transitional C. Concluding D. None

(from the Broun-Carlsen Listening Comprehension Test, Harcourt & Brace, 1955)

Exercise IV

1. _____ we had come out of the grove, the snow stopped and now, as a 2. _____, we could see the great opening out of the prairie beyond. 3. _____ the sun was near setting, we could see with clarity, in the distance 4. _____ the expanse of new snow, the Indian village in the cottonwood grove at the bend of the river 5. _____ there was no wind, the smoke from the tepees stood straight up, gray-blue in the gold light of sunset. We looked to our fire-arms, 6. _____ there was no way to know of what tribe they were. 7. _____ we were thus engaged, Francois, the trapper, was peering across the distance. "Blackfeet!" he suddenly exclaimed. My heart sank, 8. _____ I knew that he was rarely mistaken in such matters. I gave the order to proceed across the prairie toward the village, hoping, 9. _____ against my better judgment, that a bold show was the best policy. I discovered in a few minutes, 10. _____, that the boldness had been a mistake:

(from Modern Rhetoric, Brooks & Warren; Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979)

Exercise V

Read these two passages and circle each example of metadiscourse. Then label its type and function on a separate sheet.

A

The Treehouse

There were two things Mary had always wanted--a place to be alone and a place that was for bird watching. Her family was now renting a home in a big city. Mary decided that there was one way she could get both of these things. In the back yard away from the house, they had a large tree. She made up her mind to build a treehouse in that tree. That way she could do the things she wanted and have a pleasant place to watch birds.

Clearly she could not build it on her own, so she talked to her brother and some of his friends, and some of her own friends. Soon they got all the materials together and the building began.

When the building was about a third of the way through, Mary's parents came out to look at what was happening. Immediately, her parents said that the building would have to stop because the tree was untouched and very beautiful. They said that people climbing up and down would ruin the life of the tree after a while.

Mary did not know what to do. One of her friends said that they could change the treehouse into a birdhouse to feed large numbers of birds. In this way, once the building was finished, no branches would be broken. She decided to do this, and soon the building was finished.

Things turned out even better for Mary because she enjoyed herself even more by watching all the birds that came into the tree more regularly, and she could watch all alone--on the back porch.

B

Trouble Between Sisters

There was a problem between Bonnie and her older sister, Rowena. What Rowena wanted was clear. Bonnie had a large group of friends who were very important to her. Rowena, on the other hand, did not have the friendships she needed. The younger sister was finding that it was more and more difficult to keep her older sister out of her affairs. Whenever Bonnie planned to do something with her friends, Rowena tried to have some say. She said that she just wanted to give some advice or to help carry out the plans that Bonnie had made, but it never worked out that way. In fact, her help added up to meddling and Bonnie was afraid that after a while she would lose her friends.

Bonnie decided to ask their parents for help in defending her friendships from her older sister. Her parents, however, could not decide what was the best thing to do. Her mother was on Bonnie's side. Her father didn't really believe that there was a problem. Finally, the parents decided not to get mixed up in the matter. The two girls were told to fix their problem on their own. Bonnie left the room wondering what to do.

A little while later a new boy was registered at Rowena's high school. The new arrival made Bonnie's girl friends much less interesting to Rowena, and the older sister put all her efforts into working on the new friendship. In fact, Rowena put so much time into this new effort that she no longer paid attention to Bonnie and her friends.

Rowena no longer bothered Bonnie, letting her be free to develop her own friendships. The younger sister was able to do what she wanted with her friends without interference, and peace returned to the house.

(from Tech. Rep. No. 190, Center for the Study of Reading,
T. Raphael et al, December 1980)

Appendix B--Mood Exercises

Exercise I

A. To force the students to see the importance of precise versus simple approximate word meanings in order to identify mood, ask students to fill-in-the-blank where the choices are all semantically appropriate but only one gives a precise semantic fit for mood.

Susan was so happy that she _____ through the park.

_____ walked _____ skipped _____ trudged

B. Do a variation on A in which two blanks are used. One word is systematically changed, and students are asked to select a word for the second blank that denotes walking but fits the mood of the word chosen for the first blank.

Susan felt so _____ that she _____ through the park.

(from Toward a Theory of Reading Comprehension Instruction, Pearson & Spiro)

Exercise II

Is this passage moodless? If so, is it a defect or a virtue?

Before intelligent criteria can be developed for the selection of superimposed leaders, the organization, through its professional staff, must first clearly define the objectives of its group program and establish qualifications for group leadership. Second, these objectives must be made clear to the leaders. In group work terminology the concept socialization appears as the central objective, but in the experience of the writer little effort has been made to define this concept so as to be understandable to the leader.

From a magazine of social research

Exercise I"11

What is the mood of the following passage?

A.

I see by the new Sears Roebuck catalogue that it is still possible to buy an axle for a 1909 Model T Ford, but I am not deceived. The great days have faded, the end is in sight. Only one page in the current catalogue is devoted to parts and accessories for the Model T; yet everyone remembers springtimes when the Ford gadget section was larger than men's clothing, almost as large as household furnishings. The last Model T was built in 1927, and the car is fading from what scholars call the American scene--which is an understatement, because to a few million people who grew up with it, the Old Ford practically was the American scene.

It was the miracle God had wrought. And it was patently the sort of thing that could only happen once. Mechanically uncanny, it was like nothing that had ever come to the world before. Flourishing industries rose and fell with it. As a vehicle, it was hard-working, commonplace, heroic; and it often seemed to transmit those qualities to the persons who rode in it. My own generation identifies it with Youth, with its gaudy, irretrievable excitements; before it fades into the mist, I would like to pay it the tribute of the sigh that is not a sob, and set down random entries in a shape somewhat less cumbersome than a Sears Roebuck catalogue.

The Model T was distinguished from all other makes of cars by the fact that its transmission was of a type known as planetary--which was half metaphysics, half sheer friction. Engineers accepted the word "planetary" in its epicyclic sense, but I was always conscious that it also means "wandering," "erratic." Because of the peculiar nature of this panetary element, there was always, in Model T, a certain dull rapport between engine and wheels, and even when the car was in a state known as neutral, it trembled with a deep imperative and tended to inch forward. There was never a moment when the bands were not faintly egging the machine on. In this respect it was like a horse, rolling the bit on its tongue, and country people brought to it the same technique they used with draft animals.

--LEE STROUT WHITE; "Farewell; My Lovely"

B. Rewrite the passage without the mood.

Suggested rewrite:

The new Sears Roebuck catalogue indicates that one may still purchase an axle for a 1909 Model T Ford. But this possibility, though interesting, does not mean that the Model T Ford is any longer an important factor in American transportation. The section of the catalogue devoted to Ford parts, once larger than that devoted to men's clothing, has now shrunk to a single page. No Model T's have been built since 1927, and this model is rapidly disappearing from the American highway.

C. Label the kind of mood found in the following passage.

In any community--even an academic community, I suppose--there will always be those fearful, ignorant, sadistic people who feel their smelly little existence to be somehow threatened by ideas different from their own. Usually, though, the university tradition of free inquiry manages to keep their neurotic tendencies toward anti-intellectual, sheep-like orthodoxy and violence in check, at least until they get out of college.

But now I watched a mob of these mental pygmies whose sick and unpatriotic intolerance had found a seemingly "legitimate" outlet in two-bit patriotism. They threw various objects at--and then ducked behind each other (that's the old American way for you!).

(from A Modern Rhetoric, Brooks and Warren)

Exercise IV

Tone shows itself more clearly in paragraphs than in single sentences, so that this exercise may magnify an occasional slip into a fault of tone. Still, it is good to be alert to the smallest signs.

1. It wasn't laughable, it wasn't silly, it wasn't funny at all. It was goose flesh and shudders and you could go mad or your heart could stop beating like the snap of a thumb against a forefinger.

2. It was totally silent in the cavernous parking lot, two levels below the street. The trip in from Long Island had been unreal, a mechanical maneuvering of the car along the Expressway, the sudden realization that he was hitting nearly seventy, the jamming on of the brakes, the anger of some indignant housewife, her hair flapping wildly in her convertible behind him as she simultaneously braked and honked to keep herself from racking up on him.

3. Happiness is a diamond solitaire for Christmas. / Happiness is parking when you want to. / Happiness is a hick town. / A diamond is forever. (If equals each other, shouldn't it follow that "A diamond is a hick town where you can park forever?" To answer this question and test the logic of these voguish phrasings, draw a good-sized circle and mark it "Happiness;" then within it draw a smaller circle labeled "Parking" or any of the other "is" counterparts. The area remaining vacant in the big circle will show that happiness is not the same as parking when you want to.)

4. Everybody in today's schoolworld admits that tests are bad news-unfair, repressive, elitist. But that don't mean a teacher can't use spot quizzes, written questions, and such as mere performance indicators, conscious that human individual diversity must remain viable--and will.

(from Simple and Direct--J. Barzun)

Exercise V

Circle the signals of mood in this passage

What is a weed? I have heard it said that there are sixty definitions. For me, a week is a plant out of place. Or, less tolerantly, call it a foreign aggressor, which is a thing not so mild as a mere escape from cultivation, a visitor that sows itself innocently in a garden bed where you would not choose to plant it. Most weeds have natal countries, whence they have sortied. So Japanese honeysuckly, English plantain, Russian thistle came from lands we recognize, but others, like gypsies, have lost all record of their geographic origin. Some of them turn up in all countries, and are listed in no flora as natives. Some knock about the seaports of the world, springing up wherever ballast used to be dumped from the old sailing ships. Others prefer cities; they have lost contact with sweet soil and lead a guttersnipe existence. A little group occurs only where wool waste is dumped, others are dooryard and pavement weeds, seeming to thrive the more as they are trod by the feet of man's generations. Some prized in an age of simpler tastes have become garden declasses and street urchins; thus it comes about that the pleasant but plebeian scent of Bouncing Bet, that somewhat blowsy pink of old English gardens, is now one of the characteristic oders of American sidewalk ends, where the pavement peters out and shacks and junked cars begin.

--DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE, Flowering Earth

(from A Modern Rhetoric, by Brooks and Warren)

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